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first year, with perhaps greater stress on reading practice in the second.

This conclusion is of special interest, in view of the survey of modern language instruction in the Los Angeles Schools, referred to in these pages.

Le Cercle Français of Washburn College, Topeka, Kansas, now in its second year, presented in the College Chapel in the evening of March 16th before a considerable audience, two plays, "La Surprise d'Isidore" by François and "L' Anglais tel qu'on le parle" by Tristan Bernard. The work was done under the direction of Helen Estey, Assistant Professor of French. All the parts were taken by students.

Reviews

THE PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE STUDY. By HAROLD E. PALMER. World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York, 1921. 186 pp.

In the present book the author presents in a more closely knit form the principles he set forth in an earlier work,—The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages, which was reviewed in volume III of this JOURNAL. It is intended to be a clear-cut exposition of the principles of language study rather than a detailed program applicable to certain set working conditions. The author, therefore, is spared discussing, except in a general way, the perplexing problems of aim and purpose of modern languages in schools. He takes for granted that the purpose and method will vary with the individual or group. On the whole, however, the material is organized on the usual basis of the Reform, the four-fold aim, understanding, speaking, reading and writing the foreign language.

Palmer takes as his starting point for discussion the two capacities employed by every individual in mastering his own mother tongue, 1) the spontaneous capacity by which the child early becomes an expert in his control of his native dialect, 2) the studial capacity by means of which he later acquires the ability to read and write and in general to increase his knowledge and control of his own language. In learning the foreign language we should repeat the process as far as possible; we must try, as it were, again to become as little children. For the sake of exposition it is well to differentiate these two capacities, to stress particularly the "unconscious learning" of language stuff. In actual practice,

however, where we are dealing with children of school age or adults is there any clear line of demarcation? Are not the two processes so interlaced that it is difficult to separate them? By following the laws of learning does not much that was originally acquired by studial methods, by conscious efforts, pass over into the habitual, the spontaneous? One cannot help feeling that even the author lays greater emphasis on correct studial methods as a means than on teaching pupils to sop up language stuff as the small child does his mother-tongue. Perhaps one gets this impression from the fact that studial methods are more easily organized and classified.

Palmer lists nine essential principles of language teaching as follows: 1) Initial preparation; 2) Habit-forming; 3) Accuracy; 4) Gradation; 5) Proportion; 6) Concreteness; 7) Interest; 8) Order of Progression; 9) Multiple line of Approach. As a prelude to their brief but definite discussion, Chapter V emphasizes the supreme importance of the elementary stage during which the learner is taught not only to form correct language habits but is also initiated into the art of language learning, the mechanism of language method. The author is quite right in dwelling upon the prime importance of laying a solid foundation in this stage, but many will think that he is a bit too optimistic when he says: "Let us take care of the elementary stage, and the advanced stage will take care of itself." Theoretically it would seem logically to follow; practically we need far more enlightenment as to the conduct of the later stages than of the initial.

The chapter on Initial Preparation will undoubtedly appeal strongly to those who are all in favor of the oral approach to language study. But even if the principle may be sound one raises questions as to practical details. How long shall the period which is wholly based on "ear-training, articulation and mimicry" exercises extend? When shall exercises, studial in character, come in to advantage? Is it simply a matter of minutes, days, weeks or months before the beginner is allowed to use his eyes and hands, before he is given a chance to reason, to analyze and synthesize? It is so easy to lose one's sense of proportion in this initial period.

It is not possible to pass in review the very excellent treatment of the several chapters that follow. The one on Gradation is a very important one, more especially with regard to what the author has to say on the score of vocabulary and grammatical material. The reviewer is disposed to believe it is a good working principle to have the order, ears before eyes, reception before reproduction, oral repetition before reading, immediate memory before prolonged memory, chorus before individual-work, drill-work before free-work, at least for the beginning stage. But many a teacher will feel at times quite justified at least in reversing the order of ears before eyes and make it eyes before ears. One must admit, how-

ever, that drill-work before free-work is the correct order to have maintained at all times during any secondary course.

In the treatment of the topic Interest, Palmer brings out clearly the importance of eliminating bewilderment as a factor. Interest does not lag so much from the fact that the work is difficult as that it is bewildering because pupils do not know what is wanted. The teacher has no objective or he has not himself thought out and made clear to the class how to reach the objective.

Palmer shows his broad-minded eclectism in one of the last chapters, entitled The Multiple Line of Approach. In it he tries to tie together the various elements that go to make up the modern language procedure. His is no rigid method. "All is good which tends toward good." A method "will embody every type of teaching except bad teaching and every process of learning except defective learning." Applied in a concrete case as to whether the reading shall be intensive or extensive, he answers: "At times read intensively; at others read extensively. Adopt both plans concurrently, but not in one and the same operation." So with translation. "At appropriate moments and for specific purposes make the fullest use of all sorts of translation work; at other moments, and for other specific purposes banish translation entirely."

In his earlier book Palmer made a great deal of what he calls "ergonic construction" (Ergons are working language units). In the last chapter of the present book he hints at the possibility of eventually being able to include work along ergonomic lines as a tenth principle of language study. Standard exercises in harmony with the author's principles already form an integral part of nearly all modern languages text-books of the present time. They are drill exercises, ergonomic in type, that are far removed from the grammatical construction exercises of the old days based almost entirely upon analysis and synthesis. The only danger lies in making the newer kind so mechanical in character that they defeat their own ends. Work along lines indicated under the paragraphs headed "ergonic construction" needs careful watching. A sentence like, "Ich kann meinen Stock heute nicht nehmen," is memorized. Then appropriate groups of "ergons" are also memorized so as to allow of several substitutions of verbs, objects and adverbs. On the basis of the material given it is stated that 16,128 sentences may be formed. But surely, if one is not careful it is quite possible to overload the student's mind with a lot of useless Ollendorfian material.

No teacher can afford to be ignorant of this well-constructed and well-written book. It does not solve the daily problems one meets in the class-room, to be sure, but it does point out in a rational way principles that are broad enough to serve as a guide

to the teacher, even though conditions may necessitate making certain adjustments, certain curtailments, particularly on the oral side of foreign language teaching.

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FRENCH REFERENCE GRAMMAR FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. By J. E. MANSION, Late Senior Modern Language Master, George Watson's College, Edinburgh. D. C. Heath & Co., 247 pages.

This American edition of a work printed in Great Britain by Turnbull & Spears, Edinburgh, is a welcome addition to the long list of excellent modern language text-books published by D. C. Heath & Company. The present reviewer has no information as to whether any changes have been made, but the book seems perfectly adapted to the use of American students. The only "foreign" touch noticed was a reference to "Covent Garden" to explain "Les Halles" (p. 112). There is a wealth of examples in illustrations, most of them taken from French authors. There are no exercises.

In his Introduction the author points to differences between "affective" (purely literary) and "normal" (spoken) French. This distinction is carried throughout the work, and is of great value to the student who is sometimes puzzled when he finds in the best of authors constructions that he has been cautioned to avoid. The author's purpose is to study usage, rather than to repeat traditional rules of grammar.

Part I. deals with words as used in sentences; Part II. deals with sentence construction.

The opening chapter on the alphabet, French sounds, syllabification, etc., was doubtless not intended as a treatise on spelling or pronunciation. Naturally, this chapter is quite incomplete. A number of statements might be questioned. For instance, phoneticians will not agree that the diæresis in *ouë* makes *ou* a vowel, not a semi-vowel. There is good authority for the pronunciation [wi], not [ui] as given (p. 24, §12).

In reading the remarks on the parts of speech, one is a little startled to learn that French has eight, the articles being classed by themselves.

We are told (p. 28) that there are four cases: nominative, vocative, accusative, and dative. No reason is given for including the vocative, of which no instances are given, while omitting the genitive, of which two examples (*en* and *dont*) are cited.

The chapter on verb-forms is perhaps the least satisfactory in the book. Verbs "are divided into *two conjugations*, the *e* conjugation and the *s* conjugation, according to the ending of the first